(iii) Improvements in the Signalling system like Double Distant Signalling & Auxiliary Warning System (AWS).

(iv) Upgradation of tracks, high speed turnouts, increased reliability of equipment, and increase in line capacity.

(c) All trains of Konkan Railway are time tabled on the basis of a maximum speed of 100 kmph. At present there is no proposal to raise the speed of trains on Konkan Railway.

Overstaffing in Railways

1072. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether overstaffing in the Railways is costing it dear; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to review the situation and reduce the staff strength?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Increasing staff costs as a percentage of earnings is becoming a matter of concern for Indian Railways, more so after implementation of the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission. Containing manpower costs therefore not only constitutes an important challenge but also a strategic decision to ensure financial viability of the organisation.

However, even before the impact of the Vth Pay Commission could be felt, the Railways had embarked on a plan of action of regulating their Manpower both in terms of numbers and skill so as to be able to build/maintain and operate the system in the most productive manner possible.

To this end, current measures include regulating manpower at all levels and comparing staff productivity through Internal Benchmarking exercises.

Stoppage of supply of High Tensile Steel Wire to sleeper manufacturer

1073. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Railways lost twenty four crores of rupees per annum as a result of the decision of the Railway Board in April 1992 for stoppage of High Tensile Steel Wire to the sleeper manufacturer;